

Claims listing:

1. (original) A method for controlling the internal circumference of an anatomic orifice or lumen, comprising the steps of:
stopping the flow of physiological fluids through an anatomic orifice or lumen;
creating an incision in the body of a patient to provide access to a desired anatomic orifice or lumen;
securing an annular ring to the tissue around said anatomic orifice or lumen;
closing said incision;
resuming the flow of physiological fluids through said anatomic orifice or lumen;
and
adjusting the circumference of said annular ring to control the internal circumference of said anatomic orifice or lumen, using the flow of physiological fluids through said anatomic orifice or lumen as a factor in adjusting said circumference.
2. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said anatomic orifice or lumen is a heart valve.
3. (original) The method of Claim 1,
wherein said annular ring comprises teeth on at least a portion thereof,
wherein said annular ring has a gear operatively associated therewith, and
wherein said gear and said teeth are arranged such that rotating said gear effects movement of a first end of said annular ring with respect to a second end of said annular ring to adjust the circumference thereof; and
wherein said step of adjusting the circumference of said annular ring to control the internal circumference of said anatomic orifice or lumen comprises the step of rotating said gear.
4. (original) The method of Claim 3, wherein said step of rotating said gear comprises the step of rotating said gear from a location outside said closed incision.
5. (original) The method of Claim 4, wherein said step of rotating said gear from a location outside said closed incision comprises the step of rotating said gear with an

elongated tool having a first end engaging said gear and a second end extending outside said closed incision.

6. - 22. (cancelled